

**The University of Tennessee
College of Social Work
BSSW Program
Fall 2009**

SOCIAL WORK 312—Interviewing Skills and the Helping Relationship in Social Work Practice

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BSSW Program Mission

The BSSW Program at the University of Tennessee exists to fulfill a need for disciplined, highly educated and trained generalist social workers to help people improve their social functioning in a technologically complex, culturally diverse, and rapidly changing world without borders. There is a focus on the reciprocal relationships between persons and their environments. Social workers are doers; they are problem-solvers who are able to intervene in multiple-level systems and perform various professional roles. Their actions are guided and informed by a broad knowledge-base, code of ethics, and professional values. Social workers are educated and trained to do things right as well as to do the right thing.

The mission of the BSSW Program is to develop generalist social workers who are strategic thinkers, life-long learners, and opinion shapers. The knowledge-base, skills, and values necessary for generalist practice are taught in an environment that fosters professional development and prepares students for critical thinking throughout their careers. We are dedicated to preparing practitioners for the challenges of today's complex pluralistic world. Since the amount of knowledge doubles approximately every five years, what is taught today may soon be obsolete. Our challenge, therefore, lies in the on-going development and implementation of a curriculum that prepares and energizes students for generalist practice today and in the future.

BSSW Program Goals

Provision of education and training that enable students to become generalist social work practitioners who:

- are committed to advancing social and economic justice and the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession
- are committed to evidence-based practice
- are grounded in systems theory and operate within a person-in-the-environment framework
- use the problem-solving process to intervene in multiple-level client systems
- have an understanding of human diversity, special populations, and domestic and international challenges, that informs practice interventions
- use critical thinking, evaluative, and leadership skills to address the needs of a complex, changing global world
- are committed to continuous development of professional self

Code of Conduct

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct Code that is in the College of Social Work BSSW Handbook

(www.csw.utk.edu).

The Honor Statement

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

Disability Services

If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 2227 Dunford Hall at 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description

SW 312: Interviewing Skills and the Helping Relationship in Social Work Practice (3) Knowledge, values, and skills for entry level generalist practice in a variety of settings. The social work problem solving process, different size client systems, ethnic-sensitive assumptions, and the worker's regard for the person-environment configuration. Concurrent skills laboratory. Progression required. Social work majors only.

Rationale

Social Work 312 is the first of three (3) required practice courses. It introduces students to the generalist approach required for beginning professional practice and examines the knowledge and skills essential for interpersonal communication and the interviewing process within the helping relationship. It recognizes the practice implications with diverse and at-risk populations.

Course Competencies

By the completion of this course, the students are expected to be able to demonstrate (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams):

1. Explain the common knowledge, value, and skill base of practice;
2. Define the elements of a systems orientation as reflected in generalist practice;
3. Describe the development, utilization, and elements of professional relationships;
4. Define and illustrate the process and techniques of the social work interview;
5. Demonstrate basic interviewing skills with different type clients;
6. Discuss the stages and activities involved in the problem solving process, with particular attention to:
 - a. Contact, contract, and assessment issues
 - b. Social study
 - c. Use of assessment aids such as the genogram and eco-map
 - d. Recording;
7. Identify and define practice roles including their interventive activities and utilization;
8. Critically discuss the implications for practice with diverse and at-risk populations;
9. Demonstrate self-awareness and evaluation of one's professional practice.

Course Requirements

I. Readings

In addition to the required texts identified in this syllabus, professional journal articles and research literature related to the course topics are indicated in the "Class Schedule and Readings" section of this syllabus. This literature is intended to provide additional information, complement the required textbook readings and course discussions, and further develop thinking about the subject matter. The articles are on reserve in the University Library.

II. Assignments and Evaluation

- A. **Thought Papers:** Students will be required to write two (2) brief, thoughtful papers during the semester that deal with topics discussed in class. Specific guidelines and requirements for each paper will be made available at the course BlackBoard site approximately 7-10 days before the due date. Thought Paper #1 is due September 29 and will focus on professional social work and ethical issues surrounding social workers' salaries. This paper evaluates course competencies #1, 7, 8, and 9.

Thought Paper #2 is due November 3 and will focus on ethical issues surrounding the implementation of evidence-based practice in professional social work. This paper evaluates course competencies #1, 8, and 9.

Papers are due at the *beginning of class* on the due date. Papers sent via email will not be accepted. Late assignments (not submitted by the beginning of class) will be penalized 10% for each calendar day late past the due date unless alternative arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the due date.

For information about APA-style and other writing tips, please refer to <http://www.lib.utk.edu/refs/style.html>.

- B. **Examinations:** There will be two examinations. The exams will be given electronically via BlackBoard and will consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer and essay questions. Exam #1 will be given on October 22. This exam includes readings and class materials covered from August 20 through October 20 and evaluates course competencies #1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

Exam #2 will be given on November 19 and includes readings and class materials covered from August 20 to September 3 and October 27 to November 17. This exam evaluates course competencies #1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

Missed examinations will be recorded as a "0". For all exams and assignments, alternative arrangements, make-up exams, and deadline extensions are made rarely, at the discretion of the instructor, and only in extenuating circumstances.

- C. **Skills Lab:** The course has a concurrent skills lab designed to provide practice experience in interviewing, assessment, relationship building, work with diverse and at-risk populations and case situations. Under the supervision of a qualified skills lab leader, students will participate in role-play scenarios, mock interviews, and other skill-building exercises. Students will be graded by the lab leader based on their attendance as well as their ability to demonstrate social work practice roles and required

interviewing skills. The skills lab evaluates course competencies #3, 4, 5, and 7.

The skills lab is mandatory/required and begins on September 10, 2009. A lab schedule with topics is attached to this syllabus. Individual lab assignments and meeting locations will be distributed in class.

- C. Attendance and Participation: This is the first of three required practice courses. Attendance therefore is especially important since skills taught in this class are fundamental for your professional development and have direct application in future courses, field placements, and practice experiences. Students are expected to be in attendance at each class and lab meeting. Students are allowed to be absent or tardy three (3) times from class and one (1) time from skills lab without penalty. For each additional absence or tardy, five (5) points will be deducted from the student's final course grade unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the course instructor. Please note that students arriving tardy to class (after the class presentation and discussion has started) will be counted as absent.

To earn maximum participation points, students are expected to be prepared for each class meeting and participate frequently in class discussions and activities. All cell phones should be silenced and put away during class and no text messaging is allowed. Such behavior is disrespectful to peers and the course instructor. All mp3 players (iPods, etc.) are to be off and stored during class. This includes removal of all headphones, ear buds, and other listening devices from ears, head, and neck during class time. The instructor reserves the right to disallow the use of laptops in class if he feels students are using them inappropriately (e.g. instant messaging, typing emails, or web surfing) and distracting others.

The course grade will be computed as follows:

Class Attendance and Participation	5%
Lab Attendance and Participation	25%
Exam #1 (October 22)	20%
Thought Papers	30%
Thought Paper 1 (due Sept. 29)	(15%)
Thought Paper 2 (due Nov. 3)	(15%)
Exam #2 (November 19)	20%

The grading scale for SW 312 is:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	59 and below

As stated in the university's 2009-2010 Undergraduate Catalog, students must earn a C or better to receive credit for this course. Students earning a grade of C- or lower must repeat

the course to earn an acceptable passing grade before they may advance in the social work major.

Extra Credit

It is the BSSW program's expectation that all social work majors participate in the BSSW Student Social Work Organization (BSSW-SWO). All students, regardless of major, who are enrolled in a social work course or considering a major in social work are welcome. BSSW-SWO meets every Tuesday from 11:10 -12:25 in room 209, Henson Hall. This time slot is built into the class schedule as a lab for many social work courses. Given the time of the meetings, students are encouraged to bring their lunch.

The BSSW-SWO is a student organization that provides an excellent opportunity for leadership development, community and university service, the enhancement of group skills, research opportunities, and socialization. The organization and its activities are viewed as an extension of the BSSW curriculum. *Students in this class will have the opportunity to earn 3-5 points added to their final course grade by attending and participating in the BSSW-SWO this semester.* Your attendance and participation must be documented. Attendance will be taken at each meeting. To be an active member in BSSW-SWO and be eligible for extra credit, students are required to attend at least 7 meetings per semester (officers are required to attend 75% of the meetings each semester) and earn between 3 and 5 participation points. Participation points are earned using the following scale:

- 1 point for attending minimum number of meetings required for membership (see above);
- 1 point for participating in one or more drives;
- 2 points for fundraising participation;
- 2 points for community service or other participation

The BSSW-SWO faculty advisor and committee chairs determine criteria for participation in all activities. Students may earn 3 to 5 extra credit points in designated BSSW courses. Points awarded for extra credit equal BSSW-SWO participation points for a minimum of 3 and not to exceed 5 points. No points will be awarded for students earning less than 3 participation points. *No other extra credit is available in this class.*

Required Texts

Kirst-Ashman, K. & Hull Jr., G. (2009). *Understanding Generalist Practice* (5th Ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Skovholt, T.M., & Rivers, D.A. (2007). *Helping Skills and Strategies*. Denver, CO: Love Publishing Co.

Given that textbooks can be very expensive and this course does not incorporate all chapters from each book, students are encouraged to consider e-books or e-chapters of the texts when available. Such electronic formats, available at locations like www.ichapters.com or book publishers' websites, are a cheaper alternative to purchasing pricey books.

Class Schedule and Readings

Introduction

August 20, 2009

Social Work Practice

August 25: Overview of Generalist Practice, Systems Theory, and the Ecological Perspective: Key Concepts and Definitions

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 2-43.

Garrett, A. (1994). The professional base of social casework. *Families in Society*, 75, 513-520.

August 27: Social Work Professional Values and the NASW Code of Ethics

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 370-387.

Banks, S., & Williams, R. (2005). Accounting for ethical difficulties in social work: Issues, problems, and dilemmas. *British Journal of Social Work*, 35, 1005-1022.

Reamer, F. G. (2005). Ethical and legal standards in social work: Consistency and conflict. *Families in Society*, 86(2), 163-169.

Sept. 1: Ethical Dilemmas, Difficult Choices, and Ethical Ambiguity in Social Work Practice

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 388-411.

Raines, J. C. (2004). To tell or not to tell: Ethical issues regarding confidentiality. *School Social Work Journal*, 28(2), 61-78.

The Helping Relationship

Sept. 3: Diversity, Culture, and Cultural Considerations

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 412-441.

Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 11-30.

Dhooper, S. S. (2003). Social work response to the needs of biracial Americans. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 12(4), 19-47.

Gelman, C. R. (2004). Empirically-based principles for culturally competent practice with Latinos. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 13(1), 83 -108.

Sept. 8: The Context for Helping and the Importance of the Helping Relationship in Social Work Practice

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 44-54.

Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 63-88.

- Sept. 10: Establishing a Relationship**
Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 31-60.

[SKILLS LABS BEGIN TODAY]

Communication

- Sept. 15: Overview of the Social Work Interview: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication**
Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 91-112.
Allen, S. F., & Tracy, E. M. (2004). Revitalizing the role of home visiting by school social workers. *Children & Schools*, 26(4), 197-208.
LeCroy, C. W., & Whitaker, K. (2005). Improving the quality of home visitation: An exploratory study of difficult situations. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 29, 1003-1013.
- Sept. 17: Starting the Interview and the Introductory Phase**
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 55-83.

The Social Work Interview

- Sept. 22: Nonverbal Communication and Exploration Skills**
Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 113-134.
- Sept. 24: No class;** Please use this time to work on Thought Paper #1 (due September 29) and catch up on unfinished reading.
- Sept. 29: Verbal Exploration Skills**
Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 135-170.
Becker, D., Hogue, A., & Liddle, H. A. (2002). Methods of engagement in family-based preventive intervention. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 19(2), 163-179.

[THOUGHT PAPER #1 DUE TODAY]

- October 1: Questions and Questioning Techniques**
- October 6: Problem Solving Interventions (Constructive Feedback, Confrontation, Providing Information, Interpretation, Self-Disclosure, and Immediacy)**
Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 185-222.
- October 8: More Problem Solving Interventions (Clarification, Support and Reassurance, Advice, and Humor)**
Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 171-184.

Special Considerations in Interviewing**October 13: Gender-Sensitive Social Work Practice**

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 442-479.
 Yodanis, C. (2005). Divorce culture and marital gender equality: A cross-national study. *Gender & Society*, 19(5), 644-659.

October 15: FALL BREAK (No Class or Labs)**October 20: Interviewing Involuntary Clients****October 22: EXAM #1****October 27: Interviewing to Assess Child Sexual Abuse**

Alaggia, R., & Kirshenbaum, S. (2005). Speaking the unspeakable: Exploring the impact of family dynamics on child sexual abuse disclosures. *Families in Society*, 86(2), 227-234.
 Malekoff, A. (2005). Assuming a stance of uncertainty: Essentials for social work with adolescents. *Families in Society*, 86(2), 207-216.

The Problem-Solving Process**October 29: Assessment: Exploring Sources of Problems and Strengths**

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 144-186.
 Tucker, E. W., Potocky-Tripodi, M. (2006). Changing heterosexuals' attitudes toward homosexuals: a systematic review of the empirical literature. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 16(2), 176-190.

Nov. 3: Understanding and Working with Families

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 306-335.
 Bent-Goodley, T. B. (2005). An African-centered approach to domestic violence. *Families in Society*, 86(2), 197-206.

[THOUGHT PAPER #2 DUE TODAY]

Nov. 5: No Class; Please use this time to finish any unfinished reading.

Nov. 10: More about Understanding and Working with Families

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 336-369.
 Orthner, D. K., Jones-Sanpei, H., & Williamson, S. (2004). The resilience and strengths of low-income families. *Family Relations*, 53, 159-167.

Nov. 12: Planning for Change, Setting Goals, and Taking Action

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 188-217.
 Skovholt & Rivers, *Helping Skills and Strategies*, pp. 225-286.

- Nov. 17: Implementation (Special Topics: Child Abuse and Alcoholism)**
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 218-265.
- Nov. 19: EXAM #2**
- Nov. 24: Evaluation, Termination, and Follow-Up**
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Understanding Generalist Practice*, pp. 266-305.
- Nov. 26: THANKSGIVING (No Class or Labs)**
- Dec. 1: Course Wrap-Up and Open Discussion**

Recommended Readings

- Bell, H. (2003). Strengths and secondary trauma in family violence work. *Social Work, 48*(4), 513-522.
- Black, B. M., & Weisz, A. N. (2004). Dating violence: A qualitative analysis of Mexican American youths' views. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 13*(3), 69-90.
- Caple, F., Salcido, R., & di Cecco, J. (1995). Engaging effectively with culturally diverse families and children. *Social Work in Education, 17*, 159-170.
- Coady, N. (1993). The worker-client relationship revisited. *Families in Society, 74*, 291-300.
- Congress, E. (1997). Using the culturagram to assess and empower culturally-diverse families (pp. 3-16). In E. Congress (Ed.), *Multicultural Perspectives in Working with Families*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Daniels, J. E. (2001). Africentric social work practice: The new approach for social work practice intervention in the 21st century. *International Social Work, 44*, 301-309.
- Davis, K., Daniels, M., & See, L. (1998). The psychological effects of skin color on African-Americans' self esteem. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 1*, 63-89.
- Eliason, M. & Rahome, S. (1996). Categorical measurement of attitudes about lesbian, gay, and bisexual people. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services, 4*(3), 51-65.
- Freedberg, S. (1989). Self-determination: Historical perspectives and effects in current practice. *Social Work, 34*, 33-38.
- Hess, P. & Hess, H. (1998). Values and ethics in social work practice with lesbian and gay persons. In G. Mallon (Ed.), *Foundations of Social Work Practice with Lesbian and Gay Persons*. New York, NY: Harrington Park Press, 31-46.
- Hill, R. (1998). Enhancing the resilience of African-American families. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 1*, 49-61.
- Lens, V. (2000). Protecting the confidentiality of the therapeutic relationship: *Jaffe v. Redmond*. *Social Work, 45*(3), 273-276.
- McFadden, S. (1997). Redefining the family: The concept of family for lesbians and gay men. In E. Congress (Ed.), *Multicultural Perspectives in Working with Families*. New York, NY: Springer, 167-180.
- Millstein, K. (2000). Confidentiality in direct social-work practice: Inevitable challenges and ethical dilemmas. *Families in Society, 81*(3), 270-282.
- Paulino, A., & Burgos-Servedio, J. (1997). Working with immigrant families in transition (pp. 125-141). In E. Congress (Ed.), *Multicultural Perspectives in Working with Families*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Reamer, F. G. (2005). Documentation in social work: Evolving ethical and risk-management standards. *Social Work, 50*(4), 325
- Robbins, S., Chatterjee, P., & Canda, E. (1999). Ideology, scientific theory and social work practice. *Families in Society, 80* (4), 374-384.
- Robinson, J. (1989). Clinical treatment of black families: Issues and strategies. *Social Work, 34*, 323-329.
- Rock, B. & Congress, E. (1999). The new confidentiality for the 21st Century in a managed care environment. *Social Work, 44*, 253-262.
- Saleebey, D. (1996). The strengths perspective in social work practice: Extensions and cautions. *Social Work, 41*, 296-305.

Lab Schedule

**SW 312
Fall Semester 2009**

DATE

LAB TOPIC

September 10, 2009

Introductions and Getting Acquainted

September 17, 2009

Meeting the Clients: Introductions and Communicating Purpose

September 24, 2009

Empathetic Listening; Asking Questions

October 1, 2009

Encouraging Collaboration

October 8, 2009

Respecting Client Diversity

October 15, 2009

FALL BREAK (No Class or Labs)

October 22, 2009

Assessment

October 29, 2009

Problem Definition—Contracts/Goals

November 5, 2009

Practice Roles and System Termination

November 12, 2009

Evaluations